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AUTHOR Staton-Spicer, Ann Q.; Bassett, Ronald E.
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ABSTRACT

To identify the communication concerns of preservice (prospective and student teachers) and inservice teachers and to determine the differences in those concerns with regard to a three-phase conceptualization--concern with self, with task, and with impact--a study was conducted involving a total of 227 prospective, student, and inservice elementary school teachers. An adaptation of the "Teacher Concerns Statement" developed by Frances Fuller and Carol Case was used to obtain the communication concerns of the subjects. The results revealed that while prospective teachers seemed primarily concerned with self, student teachers with the task of communicating, and inservice teachers with the impact of communication, their concerns were not limited exclusively to any one category. (FL)

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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE COMMUNICATION CONCERNS OF PRESERVICE AND INSERVICE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: A DEVELOPMENTAL CONCEPTUALIZATION

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Ann Q. Staton-Spicer

Ronald E. Bassett

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Ann Q. Staton-Spicer
Department of Speech Communication
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington 98195
(206) 543-1459

Ronald E. Bassett
Department of Speech Communication
University of Texas at Austin
Austin, Texas 78712

Abstract

This study is an empirical investigation of the communication concerns of preservice (i.e., prospective and student teachers) and inservice teachers. Within the general framework of Fuller's concerns model of teaching, the two purposes of the study were to: (1) identify the communication concerns of prospective, student and inservice teachers, and (2) determine differences in the communication concerns of prospective, student and inservice teachers with regard to a three phase conceptualization: concern with self, task, impact. Given previous empirical findings, as well as supporting theoretical perspectives, predictions were made that prospective teachers would express more self concerns about communication, student teachers would express more task concerns, and inservice teachers would express more impact concerns. Three of the hypotheses were fully supported, and one was partially supported.

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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE COMMUNICATION CONCERNS OF PRESERVICE AND INSERVICE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: A DEVELOPMENTAL CONCEPTUALIZATION

Overview

In recent years teacher-student communication has been recognized as an important variable influencing the effectiveness of the instructional process.[1] Smith[2] has argued, for example, that it is more important for teachers to communicate with students than to know how to deal with the content of instruction. Wiles advocated more instruction for teachers in human communication, stating that it is imperative that teachers have a basic "understanding of communication, human relations, group development, and intergroup interaction."[3] A recommendation of the 1968 New Orleans Conference on Research and Instructional Development was that the speech communication discipline offer a course in instructional communication for all prospective teachers.[4] The 1973 SCA Memphis Conference for Teacher Educators issued a policy statement advocating: "demonstrated competencies in speech communication for all teachers at all instructional levels."[5]

Although the area of communication instruction for teachers is considered important by speech communication educators, there have been few efforts to determine empirically the precise communication needs of preservice and inservice teachers. An important consideration in the design of such instruction, and one that has often been overlooked, is the

meaningfulness of instruction to students. Much research attests to the widespread dissatisfaction of prospective teachers with their education training. Yamamoto et al. report that education students feel a sense of "frustration at what they consider to be trivial, fractionized, and irrelevant curricular experiences."[6] Fuller's review of the literature supports this charge.[7]

A byproduct of such student dissatisfaction may be an adverse effect on student learning. It is widely accepted that motivation influences learning:

> We know that student learning and memory are closely tied to motivation. Students usually learn what they want to learn, but they often have great difficulty learning material which does not interest them. . . . Our primary problem, then, is motivating students.[8]

As a motivating factor, Hall and Jones urge instruction which is meaningful to the learners' personal goals and needs.[9] Personalization goes a step beyond individualization, which identifies and sequences instruction according to cognitive needs. When learning is personalized, it "helps the learner to become aware of his personal needs, potential, and limitations, and it offers instruction that is sequenced according to what we will call 'concerns'."[10]

According to Fuller, one viable way of personalizing instruction and motivating students is to provide learning that is relevant to them. She defines relevance as "the 'match' between concerns (the problem the student is working on) and program (the problem the student is given help with)."[11] She states:

> In general, a concern is what a person is trying to do in a particular situation. . . . Perhaps we face a task or challenge

> and attempt to cope with it. When our attempt is unsuccessful, we think about ways we could achieve our goal. This constructive frustration is concern.[12]

Despite the charge to provide relevant instruction, Fuller and Bown conclude that most teacher education programs "meet the needs of teachers in a sequence different from the sequence in which teachers feel the need."[13] Thus, the content of such programs may need to be changed, or rearranged, to fit the concerns of trainess.

One suggestion is a learner-perceived sequence for selecting and presenting course content instead of a logical sequence. Popham and Baker state that the interests and needs of the learner might well be one basis for curricular decisions. They report on successful teachers who "often allow the children's areas of concern to help guide what is taught."[14] Hall and Jones suggest a similar approach: "The ideal, of course, would be to permit students to acquire the skills and competencies they were concerned about or those that would help them alleviate their concerns when they needed to."[15] In view of the importance of relevance in learning, it becomes essential to consider the concerns of teachers in any attempt to identify the objectives for instruction of teachers.

Concerns Model

Fuller's concerns model provides the framework for examining the concerns of teachers.[16] In a series of counseling seminars, interviews, and surveys, Fuller questioned preservice and inservice teachers about their teacher-related concerns. In subsequent analyses of her data, she was able to discover a number of recurring themes which made possible the

construction of categories for concerns. On the basis of an extensive literature review, as well as her own data collection, she conceptualized an ordered sequence of concerns that most teachers experience. The developmental model consists of three major phases of concerns: (1) concern about self (concern about adequacy and survival as a teacher); (2) concern about task (concern about instructional duties); and (3) concern about impact (concern about pupil learning).[17]

Empirical support. Research investigating preservice and inservice teachers has revealed that their concerns tend to differ.[18] In a study comparing the two groups, Fuller et al. found that preservice teachers are more likely to express self concerns, while inservice teachers are more likely to express impact concerns.[19] A number of studies examined the concerns of preservice teachers (i.e., prospective teachers--college undergraduate education majors with no formal teaching experience, and student teachers--college seniors actively engaged in student teaching) and reported a variety of self concerns.[20] These included adequacy in teaching,[21] expectations and evaluations of the supervising teacher,[22] and concern about being liked by students.[23] In several studies, the concerns of prospective and student teachers were compared.[24] With the exception of one study,[25] the results indicated that prospective teachers expressed primarily self concerns and student teachers expressed primarily task concerns.

The empirical research comparing the concerns of prospective, student, and inservice teachers has been consistent. Findings support Fuller's model of self, task, and impact, which posits that the concerns of the

groups differ. In addition to empirical findings, however, it is important to seek theoretical support for the model. Although Fuller did not offer a theoretical framework to account for the developmental concerns of prospective, student, and inservice teachers, support can be garnered from ideas extant in the fields of social psychology and anthropology.

Theoretical support. Several of the basic concepts in role theory may provide explanation for the change of teachers' concerns observed by Fuller. Muchmore suggests that roles are "the collection of rights, duties, attitudes, and values that constitute norms defining behavior appropriate to performing a given function in a given group."[26] In order to become a teacher, an individual must first be a college student, and then a student teacher. Although aspiring to be a teacher, a college student is engaged in role behavior appropriate to college students, not that suited for inservice teachers. For example, a college student spends time reading and studying about how to be a teacher, while an inservice teacher is actively engaged in the practice of teaching. Similarly, a student teacher performs behaviors appropriate to student teachers, which are distinct from those expected of a teacher. For example, a student teacher is expected to submit to the regulations established by the in-service teacher. An inservice teacher, however, is allowed to create, within limits, his or her own classroom rules.

The process of becoming a teacher is an example of what Sarbin and Allen have termed role acquisition or role learning. Although little research has investigated this process, the authors assert that "it is likely that a person attends quite closely to his own behavior during the

early stages of role learning."[27] Extending this assertion to acquisition of the teaching role, it is consistent that preservice teachers who are learning the role would give attention to or express concerns primarily about themselves. Goffman states: "It appears that conformity to the prescriptive aspects of role often occurs most thoroughly at the neophyte level, when the individual must prove his competence, sincerity, and awareness of his place."[28]

An individual becomes familiar with a role by engaging in the appropriate behaviors. Such a familiarization with various teaching behaviors may reduce their salience as items of concern. As teachers become comfortable with different behaviors, then, they may establish distance between themselves and that particular aspect of the teaching role. Goffman describes role distance as "separateness between the individual and his putative role."[29] Although Goffman discusses the concept as primarily a "disdainful detachment" from the role, this does not seem to be what typically happens in the case of teachers. The concept of role distance can be usefully extended, however, to help explain teachers' changing concerns.

During the preservice training phase, for example, individuals are involved in learning the new role of teacher. Thus, preservice teachers trying to master the role are likely to be very concerned about their own adequacy and survival in the role. As they experience the role and become comfortable with it, such concerns may be resolved. In their place emerge concerns about mastery of various teaching tasks: lecturing, asking questions, etc. Once preservice teachers become experienced in performing

them, these tasks may no longer be of concern to them. Instead, concerns shift to pupils and the teacher's impact upon them. Thus, as teachers become experienced in the role, they are able to establish distance from it. For teachers, however, unlike others that Goffman discusses, role distance does not take the form of disdainful detachment, but may be exemplified by a move from self concern to concern about impact upon pupils.

The ideas of Van Gennep offer still further support for the developmental concerns model of teaching.[30] If one examines the process of teacher training according to the phases set forth by Van Gennep, it becomes clear that the concerns of prospective, student, and inservice teachers would differ. In The Rites of Passage, Van Gennep analyzed the ceremonies that accompany an individual's life crises (i.e., birth, death, marriage, occupational change). He devised three categories of rites of passage which serve to incorporate an individual into a new status in a group: (1) separation, (2) transition, and (3) incorporation. Each life crisis will be marked by a particular ritual or ceremony. As Van Gennep explains:

> The life of an individual in any society is a series of passages from one age to another and from one occupation to another. Whenever there are fine distinctions among age or occupational groups, progression from one group to the next is accompanied by special acts, like those which make up apprenticeship in our trades. . . . A man's life comes to be made up of a succession of stages with similar ends and beginnings: birth, social puberty, marriage, fatherhood, advancement to a higher class, occupational specialization, and death. For every one of these events there are ceremonies whose essential purpose is to enable the individual to pass from one defined position to another which is equally defined.[31]

Teacher training may be viewed as a rite of passage from that of student to that of teacher. Prospective teachers, even though they have

made a commitment to enter the teacher profession, are still a part of the college student group. Once they begin student teaching, however, they become somewhat separated from the college student body. Thus, on the first day a student teacher enters the elementary or secondary school, he or she enters the "separation" phase. In this phase, there is a marked reduction in the interaction between the individual and the group that he or she has left. The second phase, "transition," is one in which the individual becomes engaged in increased interaction with the new group. For the student teacher, this would mean increased contact with pupils. Iannaccone attests to the view of student teaching as a transistion state: "As such, it initiates the students' break with their previous experiences and associations and facilitates their incorporation into a new set of relationships, those involving pupils."[32] Eddy agrees that student teaching is a period "which is intended to facilitate the transition of students from those who think and act like students to those who think and act like teachers.[33] She goes on to state that student teachers are neither students nor teachers "but persons in the social position of transition."[34] Once a student teacher has successfully completed this transition phase, he or she becomes a part of the new group of inservice teachers and enters the "incorporation" phase. In this phase, the individual takes on the status and position of the new group and interacts with other teachers as a peer.

It is clear, then, that each of these phases demands that the individual learn new behaviors. Concerns about the behaviors are likely to change accordingly. For example, an individual entering the "separation"

phase may express concerns about his or her own adequacy, survival, and position in the new group. A person in "transition" may be primarily concerned about mastering all aspects of the new tasks required of the role. Finally, a person who has reached the "incorporation" phase may have resolved the previous concerns, and instead, be concerned about the effect of his or her instruction on pupils.

The theoretical perspectives provided by role theory and Van Gennep's rites of passage help to explain the empirical data generated by the concerns research. Because each phase of teaching (e.g., prospective, student, inservice) involves and emphasizes different behaviors and roles, it is reasonable that individuals in each phase would express concerns about different aspects of teaching.

Communication Concerns

The research on teacher concerns has dealt with teaching in general and has not focused specifically on communication concerns of preservice and inservice teachers. Since the process of instruction in classrooms is conducted primarily through teacher-student interactions, however, it is likely that teachers have concerns about their communication in such interactions. An examination of concerns reported by Fuller revealed that some of those expressed were communication-related. Given, then, that communication concerns fall within the domain of concerns of teachers, it can be predicted that communication concerns would distribute themselves in a similar fashion to teacher concerns in general. Thus, the categorization of communication concerns according to self, task, and impact is reasonable.

To investigate this contention, the author collected pilot data from preservice and inservice elementary school teachers. Findings were as follows: (1) teachers were able to express concerns about their communication; (2) communication concerns could be categorized according to the three levels; and (3) concerns of preservice and inservice teachers differed.

For purposes of the study, it was necessary to distinguish between a teacher concern and a teacher communication concern. Communication concerns were defined as: a teacher's "constructive frustrations" as a speaker and listener in verbal or nonverbal face-to-face interaction in dyads, small and large groups (i.e., interacting with student(s), other teacher(s), parent(s), principal(s), student teacher(s), teacher aide(s)). According to this definition, for example, concerns about lecturing before a class, speaking with sufficient volume, communication apprehension, and nonverbal maintenance of discipline were included. Concerns about writing lesson plans, grading papers, and designing instructional strategies were not included since there is typically no face-to-face interaction in such activities.

Purpose

Within the framework of the concerns model of teaching, the two purposes of the study were to:

(1) identify the communication concerns of prospective, student and inservice teachers; and

(2) investigate the differences among the communication concerns of prospective, student and inservice teachers.

Given previous empirical research findings on the concerns of prospective, student, and inservice teachers, as well as supporting theoretical perspectives, the following predictions were made about the communication concerns:

H_1: Prospective teachers express significantly more self concerns about communication than task or impact concerns about communication.

H_2: Student teachers express significantly more task concerns about communication than self or impact concerns about communication.

H_3: Inservice teachers express significantly more impact concerns about communication than self or task concerns about communication.

H_4: The communication concerns of prospective, student, and inservice teachers are significantly different with regard to the three phase conceptualization:

(a) Prospective teachers express more self concerns than do student or inservice teachers;

(b) Student teachers express more task concerns than do prospective or inservice teachers; and

(c) Inservice teachers express more impact concerns than do prospective or student teachers.

Method and Procedures

Subjects

The subjects (Ss) (N=227) were preservice (i.e., prospective and student teachers) and inservice elementary school teachers. The first group, prospective teachers, was composed of 51 college undergraduate students who were working toward elementary teaching certification, but who had no formal classroom teaching experience. The second group, student teachers, consisted of 91 college seniors who had completed

education course work and were actively involved in student teaching. The third group, inservice teachers, consisted of 81 elementary school teachers.

Instrument Used to Assess Communication Concerns

In order to obtain the communication concerns of prospective, student, and inservice elementary school teachers, an adaptation of the Teacher Concerns Statement (TCS), an instrument developed by Fuller and Case, was used.[35] On the modified instrument, information was requested about the S's age, sex, academic classification or teaching experience. The purpose was stated as that of discovering "what concerns you may have about your communication." In addition, a definition for communication concerns was given and parameters were provided. This was followed with the phrase "I am concerned. . ." and two blank sheets of paper. Ss were requested not to reveal their names, and they were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The unstructured instrument was selected for use because the purpose of the study was to obtain free, unrestricted reports of concerns from Ss.

Reliability. A test-retest reliability of .74, using a method described by Holsti,[36] was established based on pilot data collected. This estimate was considered adequate for the purposes of the study.

Isolating the concerns statements. The concern statements collected from each group were analyzed separately to inspect content differences. In order to sort the concerns, it was first necessary to isolate each one. The investigator read the responses of each S, and then placed parentheses around every content unit expressing a concern. A content unit, defined as every word group that expressed a single concern, was usually a complete

sentence, but sometimes a phrase, clause, or even paragraph. Each content unit, or single concern, was transferred to an individual card, with notation made of the source.

Step I: Conceptualization of Concerns According to Self-Task-Impact

The objective of the first phase of the study was to investigate the hypotheses.

Scoring the instrument. In order to investigate differences, all concerns generated were categorized according to the conceptualization. A content analysis system similar to that developed by Fuller and Case was used.[37] The scoring system consisted of three categories of communication concerns (self, task, impact) and one category of non-communication or non-teaching concerns. After analyzing pilot data from 50 Ss, two additional categories emerged: not a personal concern about own communication, and statement of no concern at all. (See Appendix A for a description of concerns codes and categories.)

Two coders were instructed to assign a code number to each content unit or concern statement. When in doubt as to which code to assign, coders referred back to the original data sheet. This procedure served to categorize each statement as a concern with self, task, impact, or one of the additional classifications.

Validity. Coders coded the statements without any knowledge of the S's group membership. As suggested by Fuller and Case, questionable statements were coded in context.[38] Coders received instruction in the conceptualization of concerns, and were given examples of concern statements in each category. In addition, they were provided with the

definition of communication. Using pilot data, coders were trained until interrater reliability estimates of .80 were obtained.

Coder reliability. Each concern statement was independently coded by two doctoral candidates in Speech Communication. Three separate reliability estimates were obtained, one for each group of Ss, using a method described by Holsti.[39] For the coding of statements made by prospective, student, and inservice teachers, the reliability estimates were, respectively: .81, .82, .86. The desired outcome was absolute agreement on all statements. Thus, on those items for which there was no agreement, coders were instructed to discuss their ratings with one another. After this discussion, a second set of reliability estimates was computed: .98, .97, .96. These estimates were considered adequate for the purposes of the study. Those statements about which categorization could not be agreed upon were discarded.

Data analysis. In order to determine if prospective, student, and inservice teachers expressed more concerns in one category than in another, a series of one-sample X^2 tests was performed for each group.[40] To determine any differences between the groups, a series of X^2 tests for two independent samples was performed. Only the three categories of interest (e.g., self, task, impact) were included in the analyses. The tests were deemed appropriate because the category system yielded nominal scale data. An alpha level of .05 was used for all tests.

Step II: Identification of Communication Concerns

The purpose of the second phase of the study was to identify the communication concerns of prospective, student, and inservice teachers.

The concern statements of each group were independently sorted by two coders in order to eliminate redundant comments and to yield a list of unique communication concerns identified by each group. Statements were sorted according to categories (e.g., all self concerns of the first group were sorted, then task concerns, then impact, etc.). Sorting was done only for the three categories of interest. In addition, a frequency count was made of all statements and redundancies.

Reliability of sorting procedures. Using Holsti's method, a reliability estimate of .87 was obtained for the judgments made by two coders. After discussing the statements about which they disagreed, a second reliability estimate of .98 was obtained.

Results

Identification of Communication Concerns

Frequencies and percentages of concerns of each of the three groups at the three levels of interest were recorded. The results are displayed in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Insert Table 1 about here

Insert Table 2 about here

Insert Table 3 about here

Differences in Communication Concerns Within Each Group

The first hypothesis predicted that prospective teachers would express significantly more self concerns than task or impact concerns. The X^2 test analysis produced a significant value for the self and task categories (X^2=14.78; df=1; $p < .001$), and for the self and impact categories (X^2=18.14; df=1; $p < .001$), thus supporting the hypothesis.

The second hypothesis predicted that student teachers would express significantly more task concerns than self or impact concerns. The X^2 value for the task and self categories was not significant (X^2=2.92; df=1; $p > .05$), while the X^2 value for the task and impact categories was significant (X^2=17.22; df=1; $p < .001$).

The third hypothesis predicted that inservice teachers would express significantly more impact concerns than self or task concerns. The X^2 test analysis yielded a significant value for comparisons of the impact and self categories (X^2=25.44; df=1; $p < .001$), and for comparisons of the impact and task categories (X^2=25.44; df=1; $p < .001$).

Differences in Communication Concerns Among the Three Groups

The fourth hypothesis predicted that the communication concerns of prospective, student, and inservice teachers would differ significantly with regard to the three phase conceptualization. It was supported for all X^2 tests. In determining if prospective teachers expressed more self concerns than student teachers, the X^2 test produced a significant value (X^2= .06; df=1: $p < .001$). In determining if prospective teachers expressed more self concerns than inservice teachers, the X^2 test yielded a significant value (X^2=32.55; df=1; $p < .001$).

In determining if student teachers expressed more task concerns than prospective teachers, the X^2 analysis produced a significant value (X^2=13.55; df=1; $p < .001$). The X^2 test to determine if student teachers expressed more task concerns than inservice teachers was significant (X^2=20.84; df=1; $p < .001$).

The X^2 tests to determine if inservice teachers expressed more impact concerns than prospective teachers (X^2=37.3; df=1; $p < .001$) and student teachers (X^2=51.88; df=1; $p < .001$) were both significant.

Discussion

It is clear from the present study that prospective, student, and inservice teachers do have concerns about their communication and are able to express them when asked. As predicted, communication concerns were distributed in a fashion similar to that of teaching concerns in general. Communication concerns were readily identified as being concerns with self, task, or impact. Thus, the concern statements generated in the present study provided support for Fuller's conceptualization of teaching concerns.

Based on the explanations provided by role theory and rites of passage, as well as Fuller's empirical model, it was expected that each of the three groups would express different communication concerns and that each group would express concerns primarily in one category. The empirical data generated in this study confirmed the expectation. Each group did not, however, express concerns in only one category. Prospective, student, and inservice teachers expressed communication concerns simultaneously in all

of the categories. Although prospective teachers seem primarily concerned with self, student teachers with the task of communicating, and inservice teachers with the impact of communication, their concerns were not limited exclusively to one category. This finding is consistent with that of Fuller et al., who reported that preservice and inservice teachers expressed concerns in all three categories.[41]

Trends in Content of Communication Concerns

In examining the content of the communication concerns expressed by prospective, student, and inservice teachers, certain trends are evident. First, most of the statements express concern about various aspects of interpersonal communication. Only a few of the concerns could be classified as public speaking concerns (e.g., nervousness in front of a group, giving explanations to an entire class, etc.).

Second, there was consistency among the three groups with regard to the concerns expressed in various categories. For example, in the self category, all groups expressed concern about credibility as a teacher and as a speaker. Both prospective and student teachers stated concern about gaining confidence, overcoming nervousness, and feeling relaxed when speaking with others. Student and inservice teachers expressed concerns in this category about the adequacy and pleasantness of their voices. Several additional concerns were generated frequently by prospective teachers, but not by the other groups: establishing rapport and relating well to others on an interpersonal basis, remaining calm and patient when communicating with students, and communicating to maintain order without appearing too stern.

Regarding the major concerns expressed in the task category, there was even greater consistency among the groups. Speaking with an appropriate vocabulary, and giving clear, concise explanations were reported frequently by all groups. Student teachers, in addition, expressed considerable concern about other aspects of communication, i.e., gaining and maintaining student attention, maintaining discipline verbally and nonverbally, decoding speech patterns of minority students, giving directions to an aide while maintaining a friendly relationship, and speaking without rambling.

One major concern in the impact category was expressed frequently by all groups, speaking so that others understand the message. Both student and inservice teachers listed two similar concerns, i.e., communicating with parents without hurting their feelings or making them feel resentful, and listening sympathetically and understanding others. In addition, inservice teachers expressed major concern about building the self concept of students, giving teacher aides and student teachers encouragement, and speaking to students so as to keep them interested.

It seems, then, that there is certain consistency in the content of the concerns expressed most frequently by prospective, student, and inservice teachers. A major difference, however, is that while all three groups may have expressed a particular concern, one group expressed it with more frequency, and thus, placed more emphasis on it. To say that there is consistency among groups regarding the type of communication concerns is <u>not</u> to say that any particular concern is of equal importance to all groups.

Interpretation of Results of Hypotheses #1, 2, 3

Prospective teachers. The findings of the first hypothesis, that prospective teachers would express more self than task or impact concerns, are consistent with previous findings regarding teachers' concerns. In previous studies prospective teachers expressed primarily self concerns about teaching in general, while in the present study this group expressed primarily self concerns about communication. In addition, the results of the first hypothesis are consistent with the concept of role learning: "it is likely that a person attends quite closely to his own behavior during the early stages of role learning."[42] Prospective teachers expressed more concern about themselves as communicators, than about the task or impact of communication.

Student teachers. The findings with regard to the second hypothesis, that student teachers would express more task than self or impact concerns, are more difficult to interpret than those of the first. Student teachers expressed significantly more task than impact concerns about communication, but did not express significantly more task than self concerns about communication. Several previous empirical studies[43] reported that concerns of teachers changed over the course of teacher training, thus placing student teachers in a category separate from prospective teachers. In another comparison of the concerns of preservice teachers at various levels of training, however, Fuller et al.[44] reported no significant differences, thus placing both prospective and student teachers in a single category. The findings in the present study are consistent with those of Fuller and her colleagues in their 1973 investigation. Support

is provided, however, for the view of student teachers as a distinct group from inservice teachers. Student teachers in the present study expressed significantly more task concerns about communication than impact concerns, which are characteristic of inservice teachers.

The theoretical view provided by Eddy,[45] that student teachers are in a period of transition, is actually supported by the present findings, although not in the exact manner previously set forth. It was stated earlier that the transition phase of student teaching was one in which individuals left behind the former role of college student, but had not yet taken on the role of inservice teacher. What appears to be happening, with regard to the communication concerns expressed, is that student teachers are indeed distinct from inservice teachers, but not from prospective teachers. Student teachers may not have functioned in the role of teacher for a sufficient length of time to feel comfortable about their own communication or to have mastered various tasks of communication. In the present study, questionnaires were administered to student teachers after only two and three weeks of student teaching. Since Ss expressed their concerns during the early part of student teaching, it is not too surprising that a large number of them were self concerns. Thus, it is reasonable that student teachers would express significantly more task concerns about communication than impact (which are characteristic of inservice teachers), yet not significantly more task concerns about communication than self (which are characteristic of prospective teachers).

Inservice teachers. The findings of the third hypothesis, that inservice teachers would express more impact than self or task concerns,

are consistent with Fuller's concerns model of teaching and with the concept of role distance. According to the concerns model and previous empirical research, inservice teachers express primarily impact concerns about teaching. In the present study, inservice teachers expressed primarily impact concerns about communication. This finding is also in accordance with the idea that as teachers become experienced and comfortable with different behaviors, they establish distance from them. This distance may be demonstrated by a shift in concern from self and task to concern for the impact of one's communication on others.

Interpretation of Results of Hypothesis #4

This hypothesis was fully supported. Prospective teachers expressed more self concerns about communication than student and inservice teachers. Student teachers expressed more task concerns about communication than prospective and inservice teachers. Finally, inservice teachers expressed more impact concerns about communication than prospective and student teachers.

The findings lend support to the concerns model of Fuller which posits that the concerns of preservice and inservice teachers differ. Fuller et al. reported that inservice teachers are more likely to express impact concerns.[46] In the present study, both groups of preservice teachers (e.g., prospective and student teachers) expressed concerns that differed from those of inservice teachers.

In addition, the findings of this hypothesis provide support for the notion that teacher concerns change throughout the duration of training. Prospective teachers were found to express significantly more self concerns

than student teachers, and student teachers expressed more task concerns than prospective teachers. These results are consistent with those of several other empirical studies,[47] yet not consistent with the findings of Fuller et al., who reported that concerns of preservice teachers did not change at various levels of training.[48] In addition, the findings are in contrast with the results of the second hypothesis of this study. In comparing the results relevant to the two hypotheses, it seems that student teachers are a distinct group from prospective teachers, yet the two do have similarities in expressing a great deal of self concern about communication.

The results of the fourth hypothesis are consistent with the theoretical concepts of role theory and rites of passage discussed previously. Concerns about communication appear to change as individuals perform different roles and move through the various stages in the process of becoming teachers.

Summary

The communication concerns of prospective, student, and inservice teachers may be conceptualized according to concern with self, task, and impact. An important implication for classroom application is that of the sequencing of instruction. In order to motivate preservice teachers, content may best be directed toward self and task concerns. As a means of offering relevant inservice training, impact concerns should be the point of focus.

APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF CONCERNS CODES AND CATEGORIES

Overview of Concerns Codes

Code X No Concern

Person expresses that he or she is not concerned about a particular aspect.

(Examples: I have no trouble communicating with students. I feel comfortable talking to parents.)

Code 00 Not a Personal Concern about Own Communication

Person expresses concern about communication in general, or about the communication of someone other than him or herself.

(Examples: It is important for people to be calm when communicating with children. Many of my students do not talk loudly enough.)

Code 0 Non-Communication or Non-Teaching Concern

Person expresses concern about something unrelated either to communication or to teaching.

(Examples: I don't know how to write behavioral objectives. I am having trouble with my roommate.)

Code 1 Concern about Self as a Communicator (While in the Teacher Role)

Person expresses concern with self and own adequacy, being accepted by students, parents, supervisors, etc. Person expresses concern about credibility as a teacher, about being liked.

(Examples: I'm afraid of being nervous and it showing. I just do not have enough confidence in myself as a speaker. I hope the students will respect me as an authority figure. I am concerned with gaining the confidence of my students when I talk with them.)

Code 2 Concern about Task of Communicating (While in the Teacher Role)

Person expresses concern with teaching and communication performance. Focus on situational concerns: "how to" give a lecture, lead a discussion, ask various types of questions, use appropriate vocabulary.

(Examples: I want to be able to give an organized lecture. I am concerned about how to speak without using notes. When listening to student performances, I want to be able to remember one from the other.)

Code 3 Concern about Impact of Communication on Others (While in the Teacher Role)

Person expresses concern with the effect of communication on others. Statements about whether pupils are understanding what is being taught and if they are developing intellectually, socially, and emotionally. Concern with how students, parents, etc., are affected by the communication.

(Examples: Making members of the class feel comfortable and easy so that they will ask questions whenever they need to. I want to tell a child he has to do better without hurting his feelings. I don't want to upset my student teacher when I have to tell her that her teaching was ineffective.)

TABLE 1

Communication Concerns of Prospective Teachers

	Self	Task	Impact	Total
Frequency	88	43	39	170
Percent	52%	25%	23%	100%

TABLE 2

Communication Concerns of Student Teachers

	Self	Task	Impact	Total
Frequency	111	139	77	327
Percent	34%	42%	24%	100%

TABLE 3

Communication Concerns of Inservice Teachers

	Self	Task	Impact	Total
Frequency	48	48	113	209
Percent	23%	23%	54%	100%

Footnotes

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